

9-11, and 14-16 have been rejected under 35 USC §103(a) as being unpatentable over Butterfield et al. in view of Applicants' admitted prior art, and further in view of Kumai et al. Claims 28 and 29 have been cancelled without prejudice by the present amendment.

The Examiner has rejected claim 26 under 35 USC §112, second paragraph as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which Applicants regard as the invention. The Examiner states the meaning of the phrase "...wherein the disposing comprises coating" cannot be ascertained. Applicants traverse this rejection. The specification clearly states that one method of disposing optically functional layers on an intrinsic polarizer is by coating. Nevertheless, claim 26 has been amended herein to include the language "disposing step". Therefore, amended claim 26 satisfies 35 USC § 112, second paragraph.

Amended independent claims 1, 21, and 22 recite, among other things, an optical stack including an unsupported intrinsic polarizer lacking a protective coating thereon and an optically functional coating. Amended independent claim 23 recites, among other things, an optical stack including an unsupported K-type polarizer lacking a protective coating thereon and an optically functional coating. Amended independent claim 24 recites a method of forming an optical stack, including providing an unsupported intrinsic polarizer lacking a protective coating thereon and disposing a first optically functional coating on the first surface of the intrinsic polarizer.

Independent claims 1, 21-24 are patentable over Butterfield, Ralli, Kumai, and Applicants' admitted prior art, because none of these references, either alone or in combination, shows or suggests an optical stack having an unsupported intrinsic polarizer lacking a protective coating thereon and an optically functional coating. Butterfield et al. teach a contrast

enhancement filter including a support sheet, a layer of indium tin oxide, an antireflection layer, and a light-polarizing element. Butterfield et al. do not show or suggest an unsupported light-polarizing element such as an unsupported intrinsic polarizer. Ralli teaches a light-diffusing holographic translector including a holographic layer and a transfective layer being used with a liquid crystal display. Ralli does not show or suggest an unsupported intrinsic polarizer lacking a protective coating thereon. According to the English-language abstract, Kumai et al. disclose an LCD panel having an acrylic substrate, hard coating films, and antireflection (AR) coating films. The English-language abstract of Kumai et al. does not show or suggest an unsupported intrinsic polarizer lacking a protective coating thereon. Applicants' admitted prior art discloses an intrinsic polarizer, such as a K-type polarizer, and discloses a liquid crystal display stack having a liquid crystal cell and polarizer structures with protective coatings attached to both surfaces of the liquid crystal display cell. Applicants' admitted prior art does not show or suggest an optical stack having an unsupported intrinsic polarizer lacking a protective coating thereon and an optically functional coating. Therefore, none of these references, either alone or in combination, shows or suggests the present invention.

Dependent claims 2-20, and 25-27 depend directly or indirectly from independent claims 1, and 21-24, and thus contain all of the limitations of the independent claims from which they depend. Therefore, these dependent claims are patentable over Butterfield, Ralli, Kumai, and Applicants' admitted prior art, either alone or in combination, for at least the same reasons set forth above with respect to claims 1, and 21-24.

Attached hereto is a marked-up version of the changes made to the claims by the current amendment. The attached page is captioned "VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW

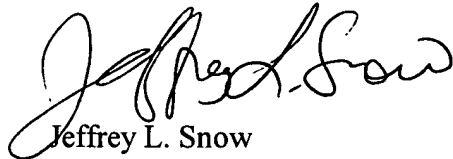
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CHANGES MADE."

Applicants submit that all of the claims are now in condition for allowance, which action is requested. Please apply any charges or credits to Deposit Account No. 50-1721.

Respectfully submitted,



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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

In the Claims:

Claims 28 and 29 are cancelled without prejudice and claims 1, 21-24, and 26 are amended as follows:

1. (Amended) An optical stack, comprising:

an unsupported intrinsic polarizer having a first surface, the intrinsic polarizer lacking a protective coating thereon; and

a first optically functional coating disposed on the first surface of the intrinsic polarizer.

21. (Amended) An optical stack comprising an unsupported intrinsic polarizer lacking a protective coating thereon and an optically functional coating, wherein the thickness of the optical stack is less than 25 microns.

22. (Amended) An optical stack comprising an unsupported intrinsic polarizer lacking a protective coating thereon and an optically functional coating, wherein the thickness of the optical stack is about 25 microns.

23. (Amended) An optical stack, comprising:

an unsupported K-type polarizer having a first surface and a second surface, the K-type polarizer lacking a protective coating thereon;

a first optically functional coating disposed on the first surface of the K-type polarizer;
and

a second optically functional coating disposed on the second surface of the K-type polarizer.

24. (Amended) A method of forming an optical stack, comprising:

providing an unsupported intrinsic polarizer having a first surface and a second surface,
the intrinsic polarizer lacking a protective coating thereon; and

disposing a first optically functional coating on the first surface of the intrinsic polarizer.

26. (Amended) The method of claim 24 wherein the disposing step comprises coating.